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ABSTRACT

National data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 1981 (11,754 adults) and regional augmentation data collected in 1984 (812 adults) were analyzed to provide--in profile form--baseline information to assist practitioners and policy makers in having a better understanding of the educational needs of rural adult learners. According to NCES' data, more than 21 million adults ages 17 and older participated in some form of adult education; nearly 6 million, or 28%, lived in rural areas. Although there were some differences, data were remarkably similar for rural and urban respondents. Nearly three-fourths of all respondents were ages 23-50. Women were the majority of participants. The predominant intent for participation was occupational advancement or personal development. The notion that rural adults were interested in education only for remedial or recreational purposes, if at all, was refuted. The augmentation study selected five representational postsecondary institutions in the midwest because of the high incidence of adult learners in their programs, their rural settings, and the ease of acquiring survey data from the students. A questionnaire, which was designed to be compatible with the NCES survey instrument, elicited responses very similar to the NCES sample, suggesting that adults want access to quality education wherever they live. The report has numerous tables; the augmentation survey form is included. (ERR)

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Serving the Rural Adult:

A Demographic Portrait of Rural Adult Learners

Prepared by:

Roger S. McCannon

April 11 1985

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SERVING THE RURAL ADULT

**A Demographic Portrait
of Rural Adult Learners**

**Roger S. McCannon
April 1985**

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The Action Agenda Project

In 1981 the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) sponsored a landmark National Invitational Meeting on Rural Postsecondary Education in Kansas City. Attended by 28 rural educators from 17 states, this meeting called for the cooperation and collaboration among professionals, the institutions and organizations they represent, and their professional organizations. This call was received enthusiastically by rural educators throughout the country, confirming the need for some form of national communication among the diverse disciplines and institutions serving rural adult postsecondary education needs.

An outgrowth of the Kansas City Conference, the Action Agenda Project is a cooperative effort of three divisions of continuing education (Kansas State University, Eastern Oregon State College and the University of Minnesota at Morris) and WICHE (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education). University for Man at Kansas State University is the principal investigator and coordinating agent for the project.

Funded in part by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), this two-year project is designed to bring about direct reform, innovation and improvement of educational opportunities available to all rural adult postsecondary learners. Within the term educational opportunities, we include those activities that enhance recreational and non-traditional credit studies, as well as for-credit institutional programs at the baccalaureate level and beyond. Our agenda embraces the concerns expressed by divisions of continuing education, extension agencies, small colleges in rural settings, community-based organizations, non-traditional programs at universities, rural and small schools and a host of efforts that defy categorization.

This directory is one of a series of four publications prepared by the Action Agenda Project. Serving the Rural Adult: Inventory of Model Programs in Rural Adult Postsecondary Education presents descriptions of 54 illustrative programs across the entire range of educational providers. Serving the Rural Adult: A Demographic Portrait of Rural Adult Learners merges data available from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) with a series of augmentation studies conducted at five rural sites to provide us with a clearer picture of the needs, characteristics, motivations and participation patterns of rural adult learners. Serving the Rural Adult: Directory of Consultants for Rural Adult Postsecondary Education is designed to provide practitioners in new or isolated programs the access to experienced professionals. Serving the Rural Adult: Private Funding Resources for Rural Adult Postsecondary Education presents profiles of private foundations involved in rural postsecondary education. These publications are available at cost from the Action Agenda Project.

A Demographic Portrait of Rural Adult Learners

PREFACE

Painting a demographic portrait of rural adult learners is akin to an aerial crop duster spraying a wheat field on a windy day...most of the terrain can be covered in a single by-pass of the airplane, but some of the field's perimeter goes untouched. Also, we must accept the fact that each growing season produces a new crop to be cultivated and harvested. With this publication I hope--in a snapshot--to be able to provide us with a clearer picture of the needs, characteristics, motivations and participation patterns of rural adult learners. Presenting statistical information in an appealing manner is a challenge; reading tables and graphs of frequencies and percentages can be boring. I'll try to make it interesting and I ask that you read along with me as we view tables of data as portraits and photos in the gallery of rural adult postsecondary education. Together, perhaps we can decide which images should be added to our permanent collection and which works will need to be "touched up" periodically to give us a sound base of information as we design and develop educational programs for rural adult learners.

Allow me to express my appreciation to those who assisted me in my work. First, thanks goes to my staff at the University of Minnesota, Morris and most particularly to Tom Mahoney for the lonely hours he spent in front of the computer terminal and to Rose Murphy for the manuscript preparation. Also, my gratitude is extended to those individuals who helped coordinate information gathering at their respective institutions: Robert Boyd at the University of North Dakota; Shirley Kolner at Drake University; Tom McRoberts at the University of Minnesota, Morris; Charles Neff at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls; and, Steve Wunderle at John A. Logan Community College. And finally, I want to extend my thanks to the Action Agenda Staff and Steering Committee members.

**Roger S. McCannon
April 1985**

INTRODUCTION

The Rural Scene

When most of us hear the word rural we visualize wheat fields, red barns and wide open spaces dotted with farms or ranches. We also visualize a more independent life style and a simpler way of life. However, like the seasons of the year, the demography of our nation's countryside is everchanging. At the turn of this century, approximately sixty percent (60%) of our country's population was classified as rural. By 1920 only thirty percent (30%) of our nation's population was farm-based, and today less than three percent (3%) of our population lives on farms or ranches. For nearly seven decades during this century we have demographically experienced an in-migration to growing metropolitan centers. But according to the 1980 Census that trend is reversing. For the first time in over 150 years population growth rates in rural areas outstripped growth rates in urban areas during the 1970's. Demographers found that this trend in rural population growth meant a shift to small towns and communities outside metropolitan centers and was caused by increased employment opportunities in agri-business, construction, manufacturing, transportation, communication, public utilities, wholesale and retail trade, business and personal services, professional occupations and public administration. This boom in the boondocks has also been caused by the development of interstate highway systems, improvement in communication technology and decreased reliance on the goods and services available in big cities. Rural America is changing. It can still be distinguished by a direct economic dependence on resources of the land; an immediate relationship between the social and the natural environment; low population density per square mile; and the presence of small closely knit communities (Amato 1980). But a redefinition of the term rural (which stereotypically has been translated "farm") is in order. Our continental countryside contains more than 16,000 towns of 15,000 population or less where more than 70 million people live. These small towns serve as the cultural, economic, and social hub of their area where most central services are located; collectively, they form a growing network of agripolitan centers.

Paralleling this population shift, there has also been a shift in the attention given to serving the educational needs of rural adults. Life in our agripolitan countryside has become more complex and interconnected and continued learning has become a must for both occupational and personal advancement. Rural adults are turning toward education in increasing numbers as a means of improving and enriching their lives. Educational providers are waking up to the fact that rural adults' needs for education services are a legitimate responsibility of our country's collective postsecondary enterprise.

However, most of the literature of adult postsecondary education focuses upon urban programs and participation patterns. Little attention has been given to developing an understanding of rural adults' educational experiences.

In the summer of 1981, a national invitational meeting on rural adult postsecondary education was held in Kansas City. The first of its kind, this meeting was intended to be a forum for practitioners who were committed to increasing educational opportunities for rural Americans. Ideas were shared and problems were discussed, but the most tangible outcome from the meeting was an agenda for action. One of the items on that agenda was to "undertake a comprehensive national study of rural adults and their educational needs" (Margolis, 1981). Hopefully, this publication fulfills that objective.

In order to gauge improvement in practice one must first establish a base from which to measure. This study attempts to undertake that challenge--to develop a statistical base of information about rural adults' educational needs, interests and participation patterns. It is a demographic portrait for us to periodically look at to determine if efforts in our agrropolitan vineyards are indeed bearing fruit or souring on the vine. It is an effort to mine the vast files of information existing at the National Center for Education Statistics and merge that data with original samplings from studies conducted in five states. Together these two efforts, hopefully, will provide us with a clearer picture of the needs, characteristics, motivations and participation patterns of rural adult learners.

Nature of the Study

At present, designers of rural postsecondary education programs are handicapped by a dearth of information about rural adults' educational interests, characteristics, motivations and participation patterns. That is not to say that research studies and local needs assessments have not been conducted. Rather, we have not "taken stock" and developed a base-line from which to judge improvement in our practice and upon which sound discussions and decisions can be founded. This study is an attempt to provide--in a profile form--information to assist practitioners and policy makers to have a better understanding of the educational needs of rural adult learners.

Two types of data were analyzed in this study and will be reported on. First, national data (based upon a sample of over 60,000 adults) were obtained through an existing data file at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Second, regional data were collected (on over 800 adults) through a series of original surveys in five mid-western states. This publication is an attempt to merge information from these two sources rather than be an exhaustive review of the literature on rural adult postsecondary education. I will first report on information obtained from NCES and then present data from the original surveys, or "augmentation studies" as they have come to be known to the Action Agenda Project.

In an effort to develop an understanding of base-line data, I thought you'd like a bit of an historical perspective and a look at participation rates of rural adults as compared with our urban cousins. Table 1 shows general rates of participation in adult education* from 1969-1981.

Table 1. Participation in Adult Education by Residential Status: 1969-1981

Residential Status	-numbers in thousands-					Average % of total Participation
	1969	1972	1975	1978	1981	
Rural	3830	3888	4605	NA	5865	26.7
Urban	9211	11846	13467	NA	15387	73.3
TOTAL	13041	15734	18072	NA	21252	

Source of data: National Center for Education Statistics
Participation in Adult Education surveys

The National Center for Education Statistics estimated that between 1969 and 1981 there was an increase of over 8 million adults that participated in adult education. From Table 1 we can see that during that twelve year period (1969-1981) approximately one-fourth of all participants in adult education lived in rural areas and three-fourths lived in urban areas.

In 1981, nearly 6 million adults who resided in rural areas participated in some form of adult education.

*NCES defines adult education as a formal, organized learning event sponsored by a provider of education services.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS DATA ANALYSIS*

Description of Data and Procedure

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) sponsors a supplement to the Current Population Survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census every three years. Entitled "Participation in Adult Education" this study has been conducted during the month of May in each of the following years: 1969, 1972, 1975, 1978, 1981 and 1984. Those individuals surveyed were selected from census files with coverage in all 50 states; approximately 60,500 households were queried at the time of each survey. At the time of this study, the most current information available from NCES was the 1981 data tapes. Thus, the information presented here is an analysis of adult learners' experiences as reported in May of 1981. (The 1984 data tapes will be available in October 1985.)

The efforts of this study centered upon analyzing the information from the sample of individuals that reported participation in adult education in the previous twelve months. Of the 60,500 households that were surveyed, we found 14,502 respondents who had participated in adult education. However, approximately 20% of those respondents' residential status was undeterminable. Thus, we could only use information from 11,754 individuals (8196 living in urban areas and 3558 living in rural areas).

According to the 1981 triennial supplement, more than 21 million adults ages 17 and older participated in some form of adult education. Of this total, nearly 6 million, or 28 percent, were adults living in rural areas. This figure of 6 million represents an estimate of the total adult population based on the 1970 Census file. But we are going to be looking only at the responses from those 11,754 individuals that responded to the survey and reported that they had participated in adult education during the previous twelve months.

Information variables contained in the 1981 NCES data on the 11,754 surveyed participants included:

- age and sex
- race and ethnic groups
- level of education
- annual family income
- geographic area of residence
- labor force status

*Sources of all data in this section are from the National Center for Education Statistics Participation in Adult Education Surveys.

- occupation of employed participants
- types of courses taken
- reasons for taking courses
- who provided the instruction
- major sources of payment for courses

Note: A full presentation of the above information, based upon estimates of 21 million adult education participants (of which 6 million were from rural areas) can be found in the NCES report "Participation in Adult Education 1981."

What I have attempted to do in this study is to selectively review certain variables and cross-tabulate them with area of residence, i.e., rural vs. urban. NCES provides us with a wealth of information; but, does not specifically break down the data to compare the above information between rural and urban. The definitions of the terms rural and urban are mine. NCES reports its statistics by SMSA* and Non-SMSA. I have chosen to designate SMSA as urban and non-SMSA as rural. Further, and again to remind us, we will be looking at the responses of the 11,754 adults that reported participation in adult education in the previous twelve months. Keep in mind that not all respondents answered each question, therefore, frequencies do not always add up to 11,754.

Findings

Tables 2-6 give us information about the characteristics of the participants in the survey, i.e., age, sex, occupations, income and how many courses they took.

Table 2. Participants in Adult Education by Sex and Residential Status: 1981

<u>Residential Status</u>	Number and Percent of Total Sample					
	<u>Female</u>		<u>Male</u>		<u>Total</u>	
Rural	1986	16.9%	1572	13.4%	3558	30.3%
Urban	4729	40.2%	3467	29.5%	8196	69.7%
Total	6715	57.1%	5039	42.9%	11754	100%

*SMSA--Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area

Census Bureau Definition: a large population nucleus and/or with adjacent communities having economic and social integration with a population concentration of 50,000 or more.

Table 2 shows that 30.3% (3558) of those surveyed who had participated in adult education within the previous twelve months were residents of rural areas, and 69.7% (8196) lived in urban areas. Of the total sample, 57.1% (6715) were women and 42.9% (5039) were men. 55.8% of the rural residents were women and 44.2% were men. Further, of the rural respondents, 94.9% or 3378 were non-farm residents; that is to say they resided in a small community or town in a rural area rather than on a farm.

Table 3. Age of Participants in Adult Education by Sex by Residential Status: 1981

Age	Frequencies			
	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
16 - 17	37	38	82	99
18 - 22	131	199	330	507
23 - 30	445	537	1012	1376
31 - 40	464	586	972	1192
41 - 50	253	292	545	753
51 - 60	168	219	349	466
61 - 70	61	89	139	259
71 - +	13	26	38	77

Table 3 shows the age cohorts of the survey participants. From this table we can see that nearly three-fourths of all the respondents were between the ages of 25-50. Slightly more older rural women participated in adult education than did older rural men. Generally, NCES classifies an adult as one who is 17 years or older. However, in our analysis of the survey data, we found a few individuals between the ages of 16-17. We suspect that they were students, but possibly enrolled also in some form of an adult education program.

**Table 4. Occupation of Participants in Adult Education by Sex
by Residential Status: 1981**

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Frequencies</u>			
	<u>Residential Status</u>			
	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>		
<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
Never Worked	93	496	230	1230
Agriculture	68	29	34	22
Mining	92	9	41	24
Construction	112	18	214	43
Manufacturing				
Durable Goods	180	82	564	238
Nondurable Goods	89	61	210	157
Transportation and Utilities				
Railroads and Railway Express	13	1	16	4
Other Transportation	34	23	86	66
Other Utilities	65	24	144	103
Wholesale Trade	40	12	158	90
Retail Trade	150	171	314	364
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	72	118	274	365
Private Household Service	2	18	4	33
Miscellaneous Service				
Business and Repair	39	21	145	130
Personal Service, Except Private Household	12	56	29	108
Entertainment and Recreation	10	12	29	24
Medical, Except Hospitals	45	150	108	260
Hospital Service	29	168	87	412
Welfare and Religious	40	49	60	83
Education	148	351	211	632
Other Professional Service	57	41	188	136
Forest and Fisheries	11	3	9	1
Public Administration	171	73	312	204

Table 4 lists the occupations of the survey participants. One can see the wide range of occupations represented in both rural and urban areas. This tends to support the supposition of increased employment growth in rural areas that I alluded to in the Introduction section.

Table 5. Income of Participants in Adult Education by Sex by Residential Status: 1981

<u>Income</u>	<u>Frequencies</u>			
	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>
Less than 1000	9	12	25	29
1000 - 1999	4	14	11	33
2000 - 2999	10	21	21	34
3000 - 3999	15	23	25	71
4000 - 4999	9	29	35	84
5000 - 5999	21	40	43	70
6000 - 7499	37	48	65	109
7500 - 9999	72	103	118	203
10000 - 11999	65	118	123	273
12000 - 14999	132	220	191	390
15000 - 19999	230	424	272	595
20000 - 24999	280	579	320	650
25000 - 49999	514	1379	558	1633
50000 - +	116	345	104	391

Table 6. Number of Courses Taken by Participants in Adult Education by Sex by Residential Status: 1981

<u>Number of Courses Taken</u>	<u>Frequencies</u>			
	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>
1 Course	988	2033	1178	2634
2 Courses	279	661	385	973
3 Courses	154	351	183	480
4 Courses	74	188	103	301
5 Courses	21	64	48	113
6 or More Courses	54	164	86	219

Table 5 lists the income levels of the participants. This is total family income from all sources.

Table 6 shows the number of courses that the participants took during the previous twelve months.

O.K., let's get right to the heart of the issue by looking at the following questions.

- Why do rural adults participate in adult education?
- What kinds of courses do they enroll in?
- Who provides the courses?
- How do they pay for them?

The following tables attempt to answer these questions; let's also compare the answers from rural participants with answers from our urban cousins.

Table 7. Main Reason of Participants in Adult Education for Taking Courses by Sex by Residential Status: 1981

Reason	Frequencies			
	Male		Female	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Personal or Social	333	783	744	1895
Improve, Advance, Update Current Job	808	1740	722	1540
Train for New Occupation	151	311	176	478
New Job in Current Occupation	24	59	36	99
Other Job Related	100	182	66	167
Train for Volunteer Work	36	32	27	48
General Education	103	297	182	413
Naturalization	-	9	2	14
Other Non Job Related	14	42	23	54

Table 8. Rank Order of Reasons for Participation in Adult Education by Residential Status: 1981

Reason	Rural		Urban	
	Number	%	Number	%
Improve, advance or update current occupation	1530	43.1	3280	40.2
Personal or social	1077	30.4	2678	32.8
Training for new occupation	327	9.2	789	9.7
General education	285	8.0	710	8.7
Other job related	166	4.7	349	4.3
Train for volunteer work	63	1.8	80	1.0
New job in current occupation	60	1.7	158	1.9
Other, not job related	37	1.0	96	1.2
Naturalization	2	.1	23	.3

If we collapse the information in Table 8 into two basic reasons--job related or personal/social, we find that 58.7% of the rural residents took courses for job related reasons, while 41.3% took courses for personal or social reasons. (These respective percentages for urban residents are 56.1% for job related and 43.9% for personal or social reasons.)

Table 9 shows the subject areas of courses taken by the survey participants, by order of those most frequently enrolled in.

Table 9. Rank Order of Subject Areas (Courses) Enrolled in by Residence Status: 1981

<u>Subject Area</u>	<u>Rural</u>		<u>Urban</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Business	650	18.3	1885	23.0
Health Care	439	12.4	709	8.7
Engineering and Computer Science	419	11.8	840	10.3
Education	324	9.1	486	5.9
Philosophy or Religion	244	6.9	594	7.3
Physical Education or Leisure	221	6.2	611	7.5
Arts	213	5.9	617	7.5
Language	152	4.3	575	7.0
Health Education	137	3.9	238	3.8
Home Economics	134	3.8	305	3.7
Social Science	133	3.7	355	4.3
Personal Service	101	2.8	152	1.9
Life and Physical Science	87	2.5	225	2.8
Agriculture	59	1.7	83	1.0
Inter-Disciplinary	36	1.0	85	1.0
Other	205	5.8	334	4.3

Table 9 attests to the strong interest in business related courses, health care and technical (including computers) areas.

Table 10 shows who were the major providers of the education courses that the survey participants enrolled in. The pattern of providers is very similar for both rural areas and urban areas. It is interesting that government sponsored education programs accounted for 10% of the education programs in rural areas.

Table 10. Types of Providers of Adult Education Courses Enrolled in by Residential Status: 1981

<u>Provider</u>	<u>Rural</u>		<u>Urban</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Two year college	615	17.3	1483	18.1
Four year college	586	16.5	1361	16.6
Business or industry	495	13.9	1139	13.9
Vocational or technical school	392	11.0	769	9.4
Government	361	10.2	554	6.8
Community organization	347	9.8	773	9.5
Elementary or secondary school	212	6.0	756	9.2
Tutor	185	5.2	437	5.3
Labor or professional organization	143	4.0	329	4.0
Other	145	4.1	262	3.2
Other schools	62	1.8	303	3.7

Table 11 provides information on how the courses were paid for. Here we had to dig a little bit into the NCES data and interpolate. The best we could come out with, in order to compare rural participants with urban participants is how many individuals paid the full amount of tuition or fees for the first course they enrolled in. Clearly Table 11 shows that women--both rural and urban--were required more often to pay for the full amount of the cost of their courses.

Table 11. Source of Full Payment for Courses by Sex and by Residential Status: 1981

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Rural</u>		<u>Urban</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Female	1075	65.03	2679	65.01
Male	578	34.97	1442	34.99

Table 11 substantiates that most adults have to pay for their own education. The availability of financial aid in one form or another is not as feasible for adult learners to secure.

Summary

A full and more elaborate analysis of the NCES Data can be found in Appendix A. Comparisons and cross-tabulations on such variables as age, sex, income, occupation and residential status allow one to really dig into the data for more information. But, I would like to summarize some of my impressions and interpretations of the data.

My overall impression is how similar the data appears for both rural and urban respondents. There are some differences, but not statistically significant. Summarizing, I find the following.

Age and Sex Nearly three-fourths of all the respondents were between the ages of 23-50. There were slightly more older women participants in rural areas than men. The percentage of female and male respondents was about the same for both rural and urban; there were approximately 56% female and 44% male participants in both categories.

Reason for Participation The most important reason listed by both rural and urban respondents was to improve, advance or update their current occupation; 43.1% of the rural respondents and 40.2% of the urban respondents listed this as their most important reason for participation. Similarly, 30.4% of the rural respondents and 32.8% of the urban respondents listed personal or social reasons as their most important reason.

Subjects Enrolled In Business subjects ranked first for both rural and urban respondents; 18.3% of the rural respondents and 23.0% of the urban respondents reported enrolling in business subjects. There were slightly more rural respondents (12.5%) enrolled in health care subjects than urban respondents (8.7%) and in education subjects (9.1% rural and 5.9% urban). Conversely, there were more urban respondents enrolled in arts and language subjects than rural respondents.

Types of Providers Here we see a very similar pattern again. The two-year college emerged as the top provider of adult education in both rural and urban areas, followed closely by four-year colleges and then business and industry. Vocational schools and government played a slightly greater role in providing courses in rural areas than in urban areas, but elementary and secondary schools showed more activity in urban than in rural areas.

Number of Courses Taken Over three-fourths of both the rural and urban respondents took one or two courses in the previous twelve months. But, again, the pattern is decidedly similar between rural and urban participants in the number of courses they took.

Source of Payment Clearly, women were required to pay the full cost of their courses more often than men, whether rural or urban. Over 65% of both rural and urban women had to pay the full cost of their courses as compared to nearly 35% of the men.

General Appendix A presents additional information (frequencies only) on the respondents in the 1981 NCES Survey. Age, income, occupation and sex are cross-tabulated with reasons for enrolling and types of subjects enrolled in for both the rural and urban respondents. This additional information is provided for those who wish to dig more deeply into the data. Generally, again these data depict very similar patterns between the rural and urban respondents.

What does all this tell us or suggest? Well, first of all, it gives us a base-line of national demographic data that for the first time compares participation patterns in adult education between rural and urban adult learners. Second, it suggests that there are more similarities in these patterns than differences. Third, it shows the overall role women play in making up the majority of adult education participants. And, fourth, it indicates the predominant intent of participation, e.g., occupational advancement or personal development. Ahhh, so we've known all this all along. Well yes, maybe, but now it is substantiated. It also does refute some early studies reported in the literature that rural adults aren't interested in learning, or if they are, it is only for remedial or recreational purposes (Hamilton 1976). Both rural and urban participants expressed strong interest in taking job-related courses. In fact, slightly more rural adult learners (43.1%) indicated that they took courses to improve, advance or update a current occupation than did urban adult learners (40.2%). This may suggest a very significant shift in rural adult learners' reasons for enrolling, i.e., they are more occupationally motivated than recreationally motivated.

AUGMENTATION STUDIES DATA ANALYSIS

In this section we are focusing entirely upon postsecondary education and the experiences of adults who were enrolled in higher education institutions in a rural setting. Since the data we analyzed from NCES were collected in May 1981, an effort to augment and verify it with more current information was undertaken. Also, the NCES data didn't tell us much about barriers adults experience, nor the needs and preferences they have for services. These augmentation studies allowed us an opportunity to probe a bit more in these areas.

Study Sites

Five postsecondary education institutions in the midwest were selected as sites for these augmentation studies. These institutions represent a variety of types of postsecondary education, i.e., two and four year colleges, public and private institutions, single focus and comprehensive missions, and autonomous and coordinate campuses.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Description</u>
Drake University Des Moines, Iowa	A private university located in the capital city of the state having the most farms in the nation.
John A. Logan College Carterville, Illinois	A public, two-year community college located in rural southern Illinois. The area has a depressed economy and high unemployment. A coal mining and agricultural area.
University of Minnesota, Morris Morris, Minnesota	A public, undergraduate, liberal arts college. A branch campus of the state's land grant institution. Located in rural western Minnesota.
University of North Dakota Grand Forks, North Dakota	A public, comprehensive university located on the state's eastern border with outreach centers located in several communities in the state.
University of Wisconsin, River Falls River Falls, Wisconsin	An autonomous campus in the statewide University of Wisconsin system. Located in rural western Wisconsin 30 miles from the metropolitan area of Minneapolis/St. Paul (Minnesota).

These sites were selected because of the high incidence of adult learners in the programs, the rural setting of the programs, and partially because of budget limitations and the ease of acquiring survey data from students. The directors of the respective programs generously agreed to cooperate in the gathering of data for the augmentation studies. A questionnaire (see Appendix B) was developed to gather information on the types of courses taken, who provides the

courses, how the courses are financed, number of courses taken, whether or not an individual was enrolled in a degree program, and demographic information on age and sex. The questionnaire was designed to be compatible with the NCES survey so that data could be compared on each question. Additional questions were added to gather information on barriers experienced by rural adult learners, preference for class scheduling, obstacles to completing school, and preferences for education institutions.

Procedure

The directors of the Adult Education/Continuing Education/Outreach Centers determined the most appropriate and expeditious way of gathering the questionnaires from students. As a result, survey techniques differed among the institutions. Following is a description of the data gathering techniques used in each location:

Drake University administered the questionnaires to selected classes in the early part of September, 1984. This group included 132 adult learners who registered and attended evening and weekend classes through Drake University. The sample approximated the population of typical adult learners at Drake. The questionnaires were handed out in the classes, completed and gathered in one sitting.

John A. Logan College administered the questionnaires to adult learners who were participants in campus classes and in adult evening classes. The questionnaire was administered to 203 adult learners at the end of September, 1984.

The University of Minnesota, Morris administered the questionnaires to adult learners who were on the Continuing Education and Regional Programs mailing list. A sample of every third individual was selected for this mailing. A total of 674 questionnaires accompanied by a cover letter were mailed to the sample. The mailing list was composed of individuals who had registered for Continuing Education offerings including evening classes, seminars, workshops and those who had requested information about programs at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Two hundred and three (203) questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 30.1%. This survey was conducted in late September, 1984.

The University of North Dakota polled students from a number of their programs. The questionnaires were administered to extension class participants, evening class participants, non-credit seminar participants, graduate center participants, and adult learners at the Grand Forks Air Force Base. A total of 145 questionnaires were returned. This comprehensive sample included adult learners in undergraduate as well as graduate programs, credit and non-credit programs, and professional and personal development programs. The questionnaires were administered and gathered in the classes. These were administered during the middle of September, 1984.

The University of Wisconsin, River Falls mailed the questionnaires to two groups of adult learners. One group was a self-interest group of 155 adults who had sought career guidance using the Discover II Computerized Vocational Guidance Program in the Continuing Education and Extension Program. The second group was a group of 85 recently registered adults who were taking evening, weekend or business degree courses through the Continuing Education and Extension Program. These two groups were identified for the survey because they represented the typical adult learners who frequented the Continuing Education offerings at Wisconsin-River Falls. A total of 129 questionnaires were completed and returned for a response rate of 53.7%. The mailing was conducted in early September, 1984.

Findings

Frequencies and percentages for each question on the survey (see Appendix B) were tabulated for each institution participating in the survey. Tables were constructed to show frequencies for each item on the questionnaire, for each institution, and for comparable data from the NCES study. Cross-tabulations were made on some items of the questionnaire, primarily those controlling for age and sex. Following is a presentation of the data. It contains information about 812 individuals who participated in postsecondary education in the fall of 1984. Their reasons for enrolling, types of courses they took, how they financed their courses and their attitudes toward obstacles and needs were solicited. Tables 1 through 23 list this information.

Table 1. Age and Sex of Adult Learners

<u>Age</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
0-16	0	0.0	2	0.3
17-24	37	14.4	56	10.0
25-34	102	39.6	201	36.2
35-44	65	25.2	166	29.0
45-54	29	11.2	95	17.1
55-64	18	7.0	26	4.6
65-over	6	2.3	14	2.5
	N=257		N=555	

Table 2. Age of Adult Learners by Institution

<u>Age</u>	<u>UMM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-16	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.0	2	0.2
17-24	7	3.4	6	4.7	28	19.3	17	12.9	35	17.2	93	11.5
25-34	62	30.5	57	44.2	66	45.5	59	44.7	59	29.1	303	37.3
35-44	72	35.5	48	37.2	35	24.1	38	28.8	33	16.3	226	27.8
45-54	40	19.7	16	12.4	13	9.0	16	12.1	39	19.2	124	15.3
55-64	16	7.9	1	0.8	3	2.1	2	1.5	22	10.8	44	5.4
65-over	6	3.0	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	13	6.4	20	2.5
	N=203		N=129		N=145		N=132		N=203		N=812	

Table 3. Sex of Adult Learners by Institution

<u>Sex</u>	<u>UMM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	52	25.6	31	24.0	64	44.1	50	37.9	60	29.6	257	31.7
Female	151	74.4	98	76.0	81	55.9	82	62.1	143	70.4	555	68.3
	N=203		N=129		N=145		N=132		N=203		N=812	

Table 4. Adult Learners in Degree/Certificate Program by Sex

<u>Response</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Yes, In Degree Program	88	34.2	172	31.0
No, Not In Degree Program	169	65.7	383	69.0
N=257		N=555		

Table 5. Adult Learners in Degree/Certificate Program by Institution

15 <u>Response</u>	<u>UNM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	41	20.2	57	44.2	63	43.4	88	66.7	11	5.4	260	32.0
No	162	79.8	72	55.8	82	56.6	44	33.3	192	94.6	552	68.0
	N=203		N=129		N=145		N=132		N=203		N=812	

Table 6. Number of Individuals Who Participated In Adult Education Course/
Activity to Meet Licensure/Certificate Requirement by Sex

<u>Response</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	37	14.4	114	20.5
No	220	85.6	441	79.5
N=257		N=555		26

Table 7. Number of Individuals Who Participated in Adult Education Course/
Activity to Meet Licensure/Certificate Requirement by Institution

<u>Response</u>	<u>UPRM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	64	31.5	27	20.9	26	17.9	14	10.6	20	9.9	151	18.6
No	139	68.5	102	79.1	119	82.1	118	89.4	183	90.1	661	81.4
	N=203		N=129		N=145		N=132		N=203		N=812	

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Table 8. Number of Adult Education Courses/Activities Participated In
During the Previous Twelve Months by Adult Learners by Sex

Frequency	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
0	102	39.6	179	32.2
1	43	16.7	111	20.0
2	44	17.1	93	16.7
3	27	10.5	68	12.2
4	13	5.0	39	7.0
5	7	2.7	24	4.3
6 or more	21	8.1	41	7.3
	N=257		N=555	

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Table 9. Number of Adult Education Courses/Activities Participated In During the Previous Twelve Months by Adult Learners by Institution

<u>Frequency</u>	<u>UMM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
20	0	62	30.5	44	34.1	34	23.4	31	23.5	110	54.2	281	34.6
	1	38	18.7	26	20.2	17	11.7	22	16.7	51	25.1	154	19.0
	2	29	14.3	17	13.2	43	29.7	22	16.7	26	12.8	137	16.9
	3	27	13.3	17	13.2	19	13.1	25	18.9	7	3.4	95	11.7
	4	21	10.3	6	4.7	15	10.3	8	6.1	2	1.0	52	6.4
	5	9	4.4	4	3.1	5	3.4	9	6.8	4	2.0	31	3.8
	6 or more	17	8.3	15	11.6	12	8.2	15	11.3	3	1.4	62	7.6
N=203			N=129			N=145			N=132			N=812	

Table 10. Rank Order of Number of Adult Learners by Subject Areas by Sex

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Business	77	29.9	144	25.9
Engineering/Technical (Computers)	42	16.3	92	16.5
Arts	13	5.0	79	14.2
Language, Literature, Communication	26	10.1	69	12.4
Health Care/Science	31	12.0	60	10.8
Soc. Science/Law	28	10.8	31	5.5
Education	12	4.6	59	10.6
Philosophy, Religion, Psychology	27	10.5	53	9.5
Health Education	3	1.1	48	8.6
Life/Physical Science/Math	22	8.5	33	5.9
Physical Education	11	4.2	36	6.4
Home Economics	5	1.9	24	4.3
Agriculture	11	4.2	8	1.4
Personal Service	7	2.7	19	3.4
Interdisciplinary	6	2.3	7	1.2
Other	24	9.3	61	10.9
	N=257		N=555	

Table 11. Number of Adult Learners Who Participated in Subject Areas by Institution

<u>Subject</u>	<u>UMM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Agriculture	9	4.4	6	4.7	2	1.4	1	0.8	1	0.5	19	2.3
Arts	30	14.8	25	19.4	8	5.4	5	3.8	24	11.8	93	11.3
Business	49	24.1	14	10.9	35	24.1	70	53.0	53	26.1	221	27.2
Engineering/Tech (computers)	18	8.9	21	16.3	48	33.1	27	20.5	20	9.9	134	16.5
Health Care/Science	19	9.4	18	14.0	34	23.4	18	13.6	2	1.0	91	11.2
Health Education	22	10.8	7	5.4	3	2.1	15	11.4	4	2.0	51	6.3
Home Economics	8	3.9	6	4.7	6	4.1	9	6.8	0	0.0	29	3.6
Education	52	25.6	17	13.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.0	71	8.7
Personal Service	14	6.9	5	3.9	0	0.0	3	2.3	4	2.0	26	3.2
Lang., Lit., Comm.	26	12.8	22	17.1	24	16.6	19	14.4	4	2.0	95	11.7
Sciences/Math	8	3.9	19	14.7	19	13.1	9	6.8	0	0.0	55	6.8
Phil./Rel./Psych.	34	16.7	16	12.4	11	7.6	17	12.9	2	1.0	80	9.9
Physical Education	18	8.9	11	8.5	6	4.1	5	3.8	7	3.4	47	5.8
Social Science/Law	21	10.3	13	10.1	12	8.3	10	7.6	3	1.5	59	7.3
Interdisciplinary	7	3.4	2	1.6	2	1.4	1	0.8	1	0.5	13	1.6
Other	25	12.3	17	13.2	14	9.7	5	3.8	24	11.8	85	10.5
	N=203		N=129		N=145		N=132		N=203		N=812	

Note: Percent figures (%) for each subject indicates the percentage of individuals from the respective institutions which participated in a class in that subject area.

The percent figures (%) in the TOTAL COLUMN indicates the percentage of all respondents who participated in a class in that subject area.

Table 12. Rank Order of Reasons for Taking Adult Education Courses

<u>Reason</u>	<u>1st</u>		<u>2nd</u>		<u>3rd</u>		<u>4th</u>		<u>5th</u>		<u>Not Listed</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Personal/Social	233	28.6	170	20.9	83	10.2	63	7.7	21	2.5	242	29.8
Advance in Current Job	258	31.7	103	12.6	51	6.2	25	3.0	15	1.8	360	44.3
Train for New Job Previously Not Worked	110	13.5	80	9.8	56	6.8	31	3.8	24	2.9	511	62.9
Train for New Job Previously Worked	44	5.4	60	7.3	68	8.3	41	5.0	30	3.6	569	70.0
Other Job-Related	21	2.5	46	5.6	83	10.2	91	11.2	63	7.7	508	62.5
Train for Volunteer Work	1	0.1	8	0.9	8	0.9	10	1.2	16	1.9	769	94.7
General Education	37	4.5	115	14.1	141	17.3	88	10.8	56	6.8	375	46.1
Naturalization/Citizen	0	0.0	2	0.2	1	0.1	2	0.2	8	0.9	799	98.3
Other Non-Job Related	7	0.8	17	2.0	18	2.2	43	5.2	82	10.0	645	79.4

Note: Percent figures (%) for each rank is based on the total number of respondents (N=812).

Table 13. Major Reasons for Taking Adult Education Courses by Institution

<u>Reason</u>	<u>UMM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Personal/Social	142	69.9	86	66.6	116	80.0	94	71.2	132	65.0	570	70.2
Advance in Current Job	130	64.0	38	29.4	109	75.1	107	81.0	68	33.4	452	55.6
Train for New Job Previously Not Worked	54	26.6	58	44.9	62	42.7	54	40.9	73	35.9	301	37.0
Train for New Job Previously Worked	51	25.1	35	27.1	38	26.2	62	46.9	57	28.0	243	29.9
Other Job-Related	67	33.0	31	24.0	75	51.7	66	50.0	65	32.0	304	37.4
Train for Volunteer Work	15	7.3	13	10.0	4	2.7	4	3.0	7	3.4	43	5.3
General Education	108	53.2	59	45.7	100	68.9	82	62.1	88	43.3	437	53.8
Naturalization/Citizen	3	1.4	4	3.1	1	0.6	2	1.5	3	1.4	13	1.6
Other Non-Job Related	33	16.2	30	23.2	36	24.8	31	23.4	37	18.2	167	20.5
	N=203		N=129		N=145		N=132		N=203		N=812	

Note: Percent figures (%) for each reason indicates the percentage of individuals from the respective institutions which declared that reason as one of five most important reasons for participating in an adult education class/activity.

The percent figures (%) in the TOTAL COLUMN indicates the percentage of all respondents who declared that reason as one of five most important reasons for participating in an adult education class/activity.

Table 14. Source of Funding for Adult Education Courses/Activities

<u>Source</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Self/Family	161	62.6	406	73.1
Government	54	21.0	32	5.8
Bus./Industrial Employer	59	22.9	118	21.2
Private Organization	3	1.1	13	2.3
Other	17	6.6	20	3.6
Don't Know	1	0.3	3	0.5
	N=257		N=555	

Table 15. Source of Funding for Adult Education Courses/Activities by Institution

<u>Source</u>	<u>URM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Self/Family	155	76.4	90	69.8	98	67.6	78	59.1	146	71.9	567	69.8
Government	15	7.4	17	13.2	37	25.5	9	6.8	8	3.9	86	10.6
Bus./Industrial Employer	33	16.3	8	6.2	33	22.8	78	59.1	25	12.3	177	21.8
Private Organization	9	4.4	4	3.1	3	2.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	16	2.0
Other	11	5.4	7	5.4	6	4.1	10	7.6	3	1.5	37	4.6
Don't Know	1	0.5	2	1.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5	4	0.5
	N=203		N=129		N=145		N=132		N=203		N=812	

Note: Percent figures (%) for each source indicates the percentage of individuals from the respective institutions who listed that resource as a source of funding for Adult Education classes/activities.

The percent figures (%) in the TOTAL COLUMN indicates the percentage of all respondents who listed that resource as a source of funding for Adult Education courses/activities.

Table 16. Primary Source of Funding for Adult Education Courses/Activities
by Sex

<u>Source</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Self/Family	112	43.5	352	63.4
Government	39	15.1	27	4.8
Bus./Industrial Employer	50	19.4	87	15.6
Private Organization	3	1.1	4	0.7
Other	13	5.0	14	2.5
Don't Know	40	15.5	71	12.7
	N=257		N=555	

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Table 17. Primary Source of Funding for Adult Education Courses/Activities
by Institution

<u>Source</u>	<u>UMM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>UND</u>		<u>Drake</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Self/Family	124	61.1	78	60.5	70	48.3	51	38.6	141	69.5	464	57.1
Government	12	5.9	13	10.1	30	20.7	3	2.3	8	3.9	66	8.1
Bus./Industrial Employer	21	10.3	5	3.9	28	19.3	64	48.5	19	9.4	137	16.9
Private Organization	4	2.0	1	0.8	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.5	7	0.9
Other	8	3.9	3	2.3	6	4.1	6	4.5	4	2.0	27	3.3
Don't Know	34	16.7	29	22.5	10	6.9	8	6.1	30	14.8	111	13.7
	N=203		N=129		N=145		N=132		N=203		N=812	

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Table 18. Major Obstacles to Beginning/Returning to College for Adult Learners by Sex

<u>Obstacle</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Distance	17	11.8	109	27.8
Costs	54	37.7	192	48.9
Time	55	38.4	176	44.8
Scheduling Conflict	37	25.8	96	24.4
Conflicts with Job	40	27.9	95	24.2
Lack Confidence	14	9.7	84	21.4
Lack of Desired Courses	28	19.5	54	13.7
Other Commitments	17	11.8	80	20.4
Other	15	10.4	31	7.9
	N=143		N=392	

Table 19. Major Obstacles to Beginning/Returning to College for Adult Learners by Institution*

<u>Obstacle</u>	<u>URM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>Logan C. C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Distance	82	40.4	35	27.1	9	4.4	126	23.5
Costs	105	51.7	89	69.0	52	25.6	246	45.9
Time	87	42.9	61	47.3	83	40.9	231	43.1
Scheduling Conflicts	58	28.6	41	31.8	34	16.7	133	24.8
Conflicts With Job	61	30.0	36	27.9	38	18.7	135	25.2
Lack Confidence	23	11.3	43	33.3	31	15.3	98	18.3
Lack of Desired Courses	53	26.1	21	16.3	8	3.9	82	15.3
Other Commitments	35	17.2	31	24.0	31	15.3	97	18.1
Other	20	9.9	14	10.9	12	5.9	46	8.5
	N=203		N=129		N=203		N=535	

Note: Percent figures (%) for each obstacle indicates the percentage of individuals from the respective institution who listed that reason as an obstacle to beginning/returning to college.

The percent figures (%) in the TOTAL COLUMN indicates the percentage of all respondents who listed that reason as an obstacle to beginning/returning to college.

*Note: Tables 19-23 report information from three of the five institutions included in the study.

Table 20. Adult Learner Needs by Sex

<u>Need</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Financial Aid	43	30.0	158	40.3
More Information	25	17.4	81	20.6
Babysitting Services	2	1.3	52	13.2
Time Off From Work	31	21.6	102	26.0
Support From Employer	15	10.4	21	5.3
Support From Family	8	5.5	74	18.8
Increased Self Confidence	23	16.0	104	26.5
Other	22	15.3	49	12.5
	N=143		N=392	

Table 21. Adult Learner Needs by Institution

<u>Need</u>	<u>URM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Financial Aid	84	41.4	76	58.9	41	20.2	201	37.5
More Information	42	20.7	39	30.2	25	12.3	106	19.8
Babysitting Services	21	10.3	18	14.0	15	7.4	54	10.1
Time Off From Work	52	25.6	31	24.0	50	24.6	133	24.8
Support From Employer	14	6.9	11	8.5	11	5.4	36	6.7
Support From Family	23	11.3	28	21.7	30	14.8	82	15.3
Increased Self-Confidence	32	15.8	45	34.9	49	24.1	127	23.7
Other	38	18.7	18	14.0	13	6.4	71	13.2
	N=203		N=129		N=203		N=535	

Note: Percent figures (%) for each adult learner need indicates the percentage of individuals from the respective institutions who listed the need as an important factor if one was to continue pursuing formal education.

The percent figures (%) in the TOTAL COLUMN indicates the percentage of all respondents who listed that need as an important factor if one was to continue pursuing formal education.

Table 22. Preference for Scheduling of Adult Education Classes by Sex

<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Regular Day	18	12.5	71	18.1
Late Afternoon/Evening	89	62.2	205	52.2
Weekend	28	19.5	83	21.1
Cluster Courses	20	13.9	88	22.4
Single Courses	21	14.6	62	15.8
Degree Related Courses	16	11.1	55	14.0
	N=143		N=392	

Table 23. Preference for Scheduling of Adult Education Classes by Institution

<u>Schedule</u>	<u>UMM</u>		<u>W-RF</u>		<u>Logan C.C.</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Regular Day	21	10.3	52	40.3	16	7.9	89	16.6
Late Afternoon/Evening	116	57.1	53	41.1	125	61.6	294	54.9
Weekend	66	32.5	34	26.4	11	5.4	111	20.7
Cluster Courses	58	28.6	33	25.6	17	8.4	108	20.1
Single Courses	28	13.8	26	20.2	29	14.3	83	15.5
Degree Related Courses	25	12.3	34	26.4	12	5.9	71	13.2
	N=203		N=129		N=203		N=535	

Note: Percent figures (%) for each schedule indicates the percentage of individuals from the respective institutions who listed that schedule as a preference for taking Adult Education courses.

The percent figures (%) in the TOTAL COLUMN indicates the percentage of all respondents who listed that schedule as a preference for taking Adult Education courses.

Summary

In this section we have focused entirely upon the response of individual adult learners engaged in adult education activities sponsored or arranged by a postsecondary education institution. The data are presented in a manner comparable with the NCES data, but they are not exactly equivalent. In addition to presenting information on participation patterns, we were also able to solicit attitudinal information about barriers and desired services.

From the responses supplied by the individuals surveyed in these augmentation studies, we again see a similar pattern when comparing the information with the NCES data.

Age and Sex Over 68% of the participants were women of whom four-fifths (82%) were between the ages of 25-54. Again, this attests to the importance of female participation in adult education. There were some variations among institutions regarding age and sex, but generally a similar pattern prevailed.

Degree/Certificate Status Over two-thirds of both men and women respondents indicated they were not currently enrolled in a degree or certificate program (the exception is Drake University, where 66.7% were enrolled in a degree program). Logan College respondents overwhelmingly reported they were not enrolled in a degree or certificate program (94.6%). Similarly, the majority of respondents were not engaged in activities to meet mandated licensure or certificate requirements.

Number of Courses Taken Nearly two-thirds of the respondents reported that they had not been enrolled in an adult education course during the previous twelve months. Nearly one-half of the respondents indicated they had taken 1-3 courses. Fifty-four percent (54%) of the Logan College respondents reported they had not taken any adult education course during the previous twelve months.

Subjects Enrolled In Just as with the NCES sample, business courses ranked as the subject area of most interest to the augmentation study respondents. Second were courses in engineering and technical fields, including computers. Women more often (by a 2:1 ratio) enrolled in arts and education courses than men.

Reasons for Enrolling Table 12 lists the rank order of reasons for enrolling and Table 13 shows reasons by institution. Taken together, again we can see the importance of occupational advancement and personal development. The personal/social aspect appears to be a strong motivation factor for these respondents.

Source of Payment The primary source of funds used to pay for enrolling in courses by both men and women was from personal resources. But again here, as compared with the NCES data,

we can see that women were required to pay for their courses from personal sources more often than men. Over sixty-three percent (63%) of the women respondents cited the primary source of funding was from their self or family, compared to 43.5% of the male respondents. Government sources played a greater role for those students enrolled at the University of North Dakota (25.5%) and business/employer sources were significantly higher for those students at Drake University (59.1%).

The following information summarizes attitudinal responses related to barriers and desired services. We know from the literature (Cross, 1981) that adults often experience significant barriers to continued learning and we felt that we wanted to seek opinions from participants included in postsecondary education in rural areas. This information was collected from students enrolled at three of the five institutions (Logan College, University of Minnesota, Morris and University of Wisconsin, River Falls).

Obstacles Distance, costs, time and self-confidence were more often reported by women as being the biggest obstacles to beginning or returning to college than men. Men reported conflicts with job and lack of desired courses as obstacles at slightly higher rates than women. Comparisons among students at the three institutions suggests that costs and lack of desired courses are lesser obstacles at Logan College than at the University of Minnesota, Morris and the University of Wisconsin, River Falls.

Adult Learners' Needs The need for financial aid, information and time off from work are important factors to both men and women students in order to help them continue their education. Women cited the need for babysitting services, family support and increased self-confidence at higher rates than men. Preferences for scheduling indicated the need for late afternoon and evening courses, weekend courses and clustered courses.

The 812 individuals who responded to our surveys were participants in adult education at five different types of postsecondary institutions. Yet, their responses painted a similar picture. Most were enrolled in courses for occupational advancement or personal development. Similar to the NCES sample, business subjects were of most interest to them and most had to pay for their courses from personal resources. Again women were in the majority. The responses from these individuals allow us to augment, at least on a regional basis and with more current data, the information which NCES collected during 1981. This augmentation study focuses on the responses from individuals enrolled in programs offered by postsecondary education institutions in rural settings, thus giving us first-hand information from rural adult learners.

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the summer of 1981, a national invitational meeting on rural adult postsecondary education was held in Kansas City. The first of its kind, this meeting was intended to be a forum for practitioners who were committed to increasing educational opportunities for rural Americans. Ideas were shared and problems were discussed, but the most tangible outcome from the meeting was an agenda for action. One of the items on that agenda was to "undertake a comprehensive national study of rural adults and their educational needs" (Margolis, 1981). Hopefully, this publication fulfills that objective.

We knew that existing data was available from NCES that could give us some insights into rural adult learners' needs, but we also knew that the information would be dated at the time of this publication, thus we felt a need to augment it with more current information. Time and budget restrictions did not allow us (nor did we feel it necessary) to undertake a large-scale, original national study. There were the usual delays involved in cranking through the huge NCES data file (organized by Census Bureau format), but we were able to make the comparisons between rural and urban respondents, which was the first time we know of that the data has been presented in this manner.

We received a great deal of cooperation from the folks who assisted us with the augmentation studies at their respective institutions. The augmentation study section does provide us with a first-hand view of adults' motivations and participation patterns that were involved in postsecondary education from rural areas. We feel these individuals' responses are representative of rural adult learners; however, we recognize that the sample was drawn entirely from the mid-west region of our country. Perhaps someone in the east, south or west can replicate our study and corroborate (or refute) our findings.

All of us associated with the Action Agenda Project who reviewed this study were struck with the predominance of similarities between the responses of rural and urban adult learners. This suggests that equal access to quality postsecondary education is a vital concern for adult learners wherever they live. In a country committed to equal access and with lifelong learning becoming an accepted concept, all people have a right to the benefits of quality learning regardless of age, race, income or place of residence, even if that place of residence is a small town surrounded by wide open spaces or a farm with red barns surrounded by wheat fields.

This portrait, demographically painted with statistics and touched-up with attitudes and desires, hopefully, provides us with a clearer picture of the needs, characteristics, motivations and participation patterns of rural adult learners. It will provide us with a base-line of such information that we trust can be useful to practitioners as well as policy makers who toil in the vineyards of rural adult postsecondary education.

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APPENDIX A

Tables A through F list additional information (frequencies only) drawn from the National Center for Education Statistics Participation in Adult Education: 1981 survey.

Table A. Main Reasons of Participation in Adult Education for Taking Courses by Age by Residential Status: 1981

Reason	16 - 17		18 - 22		23 - 30		31 - 40		41 - 50		51 - 60		61 - 70		71 - +	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban												
Personal or Social Improve, Advance, Update Current Job	24	59	54	219	286	671	310	650	155	417	129	293	71	242	27	97
Train for New Occupation	16	21	68	185	110	286	51	165	209	603	193	382	53	98	4	11
New Job in Current Occupation	1	-	5	36	19	49	21	44	9	23	18	49	3	8	1	1
Other Job Related	1	3	13	30	42	87	57	162	20	79	27	38	6	9	-	1
Train for Volunteer Work	2	1	5	9	15	18	13	22	16	15	5	8	5	10	1	1
General Education	25	46	69	166	86	238	81	136	20	64	15	31	8	27	5	2
Materialization	-	-	-	3	1	9	-	6	1	2	-	1	-	1	5	1
Other Non Job Related	6	12	7	15	6	27	8	18	9	3	4	12	2	9	1	-

Table B. Subject of Courses Taken by Participants in Adult Education by Age by Residential Status: 1981

Subject	16 - 17		18 - 22		23 - 30		31 - 40		41 - 50		51 - 60		61 - 70		70 - +	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban												
Agriculture and Renewable Resources	-	2	6	5	16	19	22	26	5	12	4	7	5	3	1	3
Arts, Visual and Performing	3	32	15	60	51	159	56	126	32	88	27	62	21	67	8	23
Business	6	8	54	152	173	586	190	539	116	348	90	203	18	46	3	3
Education	9	28	30	47	85	128	108	157	49	79	36	33	6	13	1	2
Engineering and Computer Science	5	9	45	102	138	295	134	209	57	131	35	75	5	17	-	2
Health Care	6	3	31	48	112	207	144	196	75	128	49	89	20	30	2	8
Health Education	2	1	13	17	39	89	38	69	22	31	13	19	9	8	1	4
Home Economics	1	4	10	13	35	68	32	81	18	43	20	54	13	34	5	8
Personal Service	-	3	17	33	35	47	28	29	11	12	6	22	4	6	-	-
Language and Communication	9	12	18	78	47	158	35	134	22	98	14	44	7	44	-	7
Life and Physical Sciences	3	8	7	45	31	84	24	51	16	22	5	8	1	4	-	3
Philosophy, Religion	8	17	12	44	56	146	67	141	37	102	30	70	21	51	13	23
Physical Education and Leisure	8	18	23	70	67	159	73	164	26	88	17	56	6	42	1	14
Social Science	5	5	15	36	31	114	31	104	27	41	15	34	6	15	3	6
Interdisciplinary	2	9	8	21	10	18	8	14	4	14	4	7	-	1	-	1

**Table C. Subject of Courses Taken by Participants in Adult Education
by Reason for Taking Course by Residential Status: 1981**

Subject	Personal or Social		Improve, Advance, Update Current Job		Train for New Occupation		General Education		Naturalization		Other Non Job Related		New Job in Current Occupation		Other Job Related		Train for Volunteer Work	
	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)	(Rural - Urban)	(Urban - Rural)
Agriculture and Renewable Resources	8	40	44	32	3	5	-	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	3	-	-
Arts, Visual and Performing	171	474	29	62	8	35	7	35	-	-	1	3	3	4	1	3	2	1
Business	52	138	409	1203	104	262	38	123	-	-	4	7	17	51	26	92	-	7
Education	27	68	177	231	14	42	65	92	-	-	6	8	9	17	19	23	5	3
Engineering and Computer Science	57	90	256	515	65	130	17	40	-	-	1	5	8	21	14	39	1	-
Health Care	78	186	250	452	29	54	12	18	-	-	1	5	8	8	38	48	22	16
Health Education	34	109	55	72	4	15	5	11	-	-	5	5	2	5	10	19	2	2
None Economics	101	244	14	27	6	17	6	7	-	-	2	6	1	1	1	2	3	-
Personal Service	22	30	48	65	20	33	3	1	-	-	-	2	-	9	4	12	4	-
Language and Communication	68	224	36	113	8	32	27	122	2	23	2	6	-	14	7	36	3	5
Life and Physical Science	11	23	34	71	12	28	25	75	-	-	-	3	2	5	3	12	-	1
Philosophy, Religion	155	359	38	102	10	29	23	53	-	-	5	7	-	5	2	14	11	24
Physical Education and Leisure	192	572	9	9	2	8	11	2	-	-	4	11	-	1	1	2	1	6
Social Science	24	51	66	162	11	46	16	61	-	2	2	4	0	12	5	13	5	2
Interdisciplinary	6	17	5	16	-	4	19	46	-	-	-	-	1	-	5	6	-	2

Table D. Type of Courses Taken by Participants in Adult Education by Main Reason for Taking Course by Sex by Residential Status: 1981

Report	Reason for Taking Course																	
	Personnel or Social		Improve, Advance, Update Current Job		Trade for New Occupation		New Job to Current Occupation		Other Job Related		Trade for Volunteer Work		Second Education		Moralization		Other Non-Job Related	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Agriculture and Domestic Resources	5	17	5	10	43	38	3	6	2	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	1
Arts, Visuals and Performing	26	330	179	364	7	10	13	10	1	16	1	10	1	1	3	3	1	1
Business	15	65	57	93	262	635	207	370	26	52	60	180	9	41	12	60	15	47
Education	9	21	13	27	16	22	127	164	6	9	10	20	9	9	10	20	1	1
Engineering and Computer Sciences	29	65	15	20	226	427	29	30	49	103	30	37	4	10	9	10	14	32
Health Care	20	29	12	27	73	130	177	204	9	6	24	40	7	9	20	20	15	7
Health Education	21	39	23	26	16	16	17	16	-	3	4	18	2	2	9	9	10	14
Home Economics	5	11	96	232	3	3	13	24	1	6	6	13	-	-	1	1	2	2
Postsecondary Service	12	20	10	20	26	30	24	26	7	8	13	25	-	1	1	7	2	1
Language and Communication	29	71	63	163	13	46	23	46	6	7	4	15	-	7	5	15	7	24
Laws and Physical Sciences	7	9	6	13	17	61	17	30	9	9	7	20	-	3	2	9	1	13
Mathematics, Statistics	21	132	104	236	23	52	15	49	3	5	5	30	-	3	1	10	10	14
Physical Education and Wellness	37	126	159	426	9	9	4	7	2	5	-	3	-	2	1	2	1	7
Social Science	19	31	14	46	46	137	19	45	6	24	6	25	3	6	2	9	6	27
Interdisciplinary	1	9	7	12	3	6	3	6	-	3	1	1	-	1	1	4	3	3
	Male																	
	Female																	
	Total																	
	Urban																	

Table E. Occupation of Participants in Adult Education by Reason for Taking Course by Residential Status: 1981

Occupation	Reason											
	Personnel or Social Work	Improve, Advance Current Job	Train for New Occupation	New Job in Current Occupation	Other Job Related	Train for Volunteer Work	General Education	Naturalization	Other New Job Related			
	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban	Rural - Urban
Never Worked	246	918	68	68	71	163	5	28	15	32	14	33
Agriculture	28	23	39	18	5	4	1	-	3	2	-	7
Mining	10	11	29	27	8	8	1	-	15	5	2	7
Construction	35	60	69	109	20	31	2	8	10	13	6	7
Manufacturing												
Durable Goods	63	184	114	399	12	64	7	20	16	23	8	17
Non-durable Goods	37	117	54	135	16	54	4	4	13	18	6	14
Transportation and Utilities												
Railroads and Railway Express	3	5	8	4	-	2	-	-	1	1	2	4
Other Transportation	5	44	21	66	5	12	1	5	8	10	2	13
Other Utilities	10	61	52	130	5	13	3	4	7	16	1	3
Wholesale Trade	15	71	21	119	4	21	2	3	1	7	2	21
Retail Trade	118	245	102	173	51	121	5	16	7	33	6	28
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	36	127	113	379	17	68	2	8	8	32	2	40
Private Household Service	12	18	-	1	3	7	-	-	1	3	3	5
Miscellaneous Service												
Business and Repair	18	70	29	119	7	30	-	3	2	14	1	24
Personal Services, Except												
Private Household	25	51	29	42	9	15	-	1	-	1	4	18
Entertainment and Recreation	3	19	7	15	7	7	1	1	3	2	-	6
Medical, Except Hospitals	38	95	114	206	11	29	9	4	11	19	-	17
Hospital Service	21	69	128	200	8	41	3	5	4	16	3	19
Welfare and Religious	21	40	43	68	8	9	3	5	6	15	7	11
Education	142	252	266	393	16	91	16	22	18	46	6	29
Other Professional Service	20	72	62	196	5	22	1	4	1	17	-	63
Forest and Fisheries	2	2	0	5	1	-	-	-	3	-	1	-
Public Administration	43	182	151	297	18	35	2	13	14	30	4	21

Table F. Income of Participants in Adult Education by Number of Courses Taken by Residential Status: 1981

Income	1 Course Rural - Urban	2 Courses Rural - Urban	3 Courses Rural - Urban	4 Courses Rural - Urban	5 Courses Rural - Urban	6 or more courses Rural - Urban	
Less than 1,000	22	25	9	6	2	3	1
1,000 - 1,999	10	33	2	6	1	4	1
2,000 - 2,999	22	29	6	11	2	5	1
3,000 - 3,999	23	58	7	18	3	6	-
4,000 - 4,999	28	66	8	22	1	11	2
5,000 - 5,999	46	65	9	27	4	7	3
6,000 - 7,499	71	102	11	28	12	15	4
7,500 - 9,999	114	193	32	48	22	23	7
10,000 - 11,999	124	245	32	75	14	34	10
12,000 - 14,999	199	362	65	104	29	69	9
15,000 - 19,999	316	591	96	188	49	90	19
20,000 - 24,999	378	704	120	256	37	127	38
25,000 - 49,999	619	1674	193	630	123	316	58
50,000 - +	112	366	48	160	21	87	15

APPENDIX B

Augmentation Studies Questionnaire

4163

Adult Post-Secondary Education Survey

The information requested in the following items will be used only for planning and research. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Individuals will not be identified in any analysis or report.

Please consider each item thoughtfully, and answer it frankly. We hope you will answer as many questions as you can because complete data are important to the usefulness of the survey.

A. Age (Please indicate number) _____

B. Sex (Please check one) Male _____ Female _____

C. Are you currently in a degree or certificate program (such as a diploma; associates, bachelors, masters or doctoral degree program; or vocational/professional certificate program)? Yes _____ No _____

D. Are you currently enrolled, or during the past 12 months have you enrolled in any organized adult education courses or activities (including credit and non-credit activities, classes, workshops, seminars, etc.)? Yes _____ No _____

E. During the past 12 months, how many of these courses or activities did you participate in (including any that you did not complete)? (Please indicate number) _____

F. In what general subject area(s) were the course(s)? Please check all that apply:

1. _____ Agriculture

9. _____ Personal Service Occupation

2. _____ Arts

10. _____ Language, Literature, Communication

3. _____ Business

11. _____ Life/Physical Sciences, Mathematics

4. _____ Engineering/Technology (including Computer Science)

12. _____ Philosophy, Religion, Psychology

5. _____ Health Care/Science

13. _____ Physical Education, Leisure

6. _____ Health Education

14. _____ Social Sciences, Law

7. _____ Home Economics

15. _____ Interdisciplinary Studies

8. _____ Education

16. _____ Other (Please List) _____

G. What were your major reasons for taking the course(s)? Please list up to five by indicating "1" next to the most important reason, indicate "2" next to the second most important reason, indicate "3" next to the third most important reason, indicate "4" next to the fourth most important reason, and indicate "5" next to the least important reason for taking the course(s):

1. _____ Personal or social reasons (i.e. personal development, recreational interest).

6. _____ To train for volunteer work.

2. _____ To improve, advance, or keep up to date in current job.

7. _____ For general education.

3. _____ To train for an occupation previously not worked in.

8. _____ To prepare for naturalization as an American citizen.

4. _____ To obtain a new job in current occupation or one previously worked in.

9. _____ Other non-job related reasons.

5. _____ Other job related reasons.

H. Did you take the course(s) to meet a requirement for obtaining or renewing a license or certificate in a trade or profession as required by law or regulation? Yes _____ No _____

I. Who provided the information for the course(s)? Please check all that apply:

1. _____ Elementary school/High school

7. _____ Business or industrial employer

2. _____ Community or junior college

8. _____ Labor organization or professional association

3. _____ Four year college or university

9. _____ Federal, state, county or local government agency

4. _____ Vocational, business, hospital or flight school

10. _____ Private community organization (i.e. church, YMCA, Red Cross)

5. _____ Other school

11. _____ Other (Please Specify) _____

6. _____ Tutor/private instructor

12. _____ Don't know

J. Who paid for the course(s)? Please check all that apply:

1. Self or family
2. Government
3. Business or industrial employer
4. Private organization (i.e. church, YMCA, labor/professional organization)
5. Other (Please list) _____
6. Don't know

K. What was the primary source of funding of the course(s)? (Please indicate by the number from the choices listed in question "J" above, i.e. 1, 2, 3, etc.) _____

L. The biggest obstacles to my beginning or my returning to college are (check as many as you wish):

1. Distance
2. Costs
3. Time
4. Scheduling conflicts
5. Conflicts with present job
6. Apprehension about my ability to succeed
7. Lack of courses in my area of interest
8. Other commitments
9. Other _____

M. I would prefer:

1. Courses during the regular day schedule
2. Late afternoon and evening courses
3. Weekend courses
4. Clustered courses (courses in a program during a concentrated time once a week)
5. Single courses from the regular catalog, whether or not they lead to a degree
6. Only courses in programs which lead to a degree

N. I am interested in this institution primarily because (check as many as apply):

1. It is nearby
2. It is cheap
3. It has a good reputation
4. It offers the programs I want
5. It is my only option
6. Other _____

O. To help me continue my education, I most need (check as many as apply):

1. Financial aid
2. More information
3. Babysitting services
4. Time off from work
5. Encouragement from my employer
6. Encouragement from my family
7. Increased self-confidence
8. Other _____

P. How, if at all, are your needs as an adult learner different from those of traditional, full-time, college-aged learners? Please explain.

Q. If you feel that the format of this questionnaire distorts your response to the questions, please feel free to give us additional detail or comments.

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